(b) whether this matter was brought to the notice of Public Enterprises Selection Board, the Appointment Committee of Cabinet and BIFR; and

(c) if so, what is the present position of the above case and whether similar cases of extension exist in respect of other P.S.Us/Boards/Committees under his Minstry?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) Though the approved tenure of appointment of the present CMD, Cement Corporation of India (CCI) was upto 1.1.99, he continues to remain in the post on the basis of an order passed by the Delhi High Court on 31.12.98. Necessary action regarding extension or otherwise of the tenure of the concerned official beyong the approved period was initiated by the Ministry in advance as per the prescribed procedure.

(b) The matter has already been brought to the notice of the concerned authorities. BIFR is not concerned with the matter.

(c) Certain Writ petitions filed by the present CMD, CCI are still pending before the Delhi High Court and the next hearing of the case is scheduled for 24.3.99. In its earlier order dated 31.12.98, the High Court has, inter alia, directed that 'till the next date status quo with respect to the petitioner's post, namely, CMD/CCI shall continue to be maintained'. The present incumbent is accordingly continuing in the post of CMD, CCI as the matter is sub-judice.

There is no similar case in respect of other PSUs/Boards/committees under the Department of Heavy Industry.

Revival of PSUs

2082. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "CABINET STALLS MOVE TO CLOSE EIGHT PSUs" which appeared in the Statesmen, dated 24th February, 1999;

(b) if so, whether the Voluntary Separation Scheme (VSS) is being reviewed to ensure necessary manpower and expertise to run the revived units;

(c) whether adequate provision has been made for non-plan support till a final decision on revival of these units; and

(d) if not, the reasons there for?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government have decided to extend by another 3 months the initial offer of Voluntary Separation Scheme (VSS). Government have also decided to set up a group of experts to review the possibilities of revival of atleast some of these units.

(c) and (d) Non-Plan support is being provided to these units within the budgetary constraints for meeting their financial requirements.

Revival of SSIs

2083. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has submitted an eight point plant for revival of Small Scale Industries (SSI) Sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what steps are being contemplated for being taken on these recommendations so as to make our SSI units functional in the changing scenario of globalisation?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. CII has submitted an eight

point plan for stimulating the SSIs. Their plan recommends appraising the working capital requirement of SSIs using Nayak Committee recommendations; enhancing the excise exemption limit, encouraging the R&D expenditure of small units by increasing the weighted reduction from 125 per cent to 150 per cent; full depreciation benefits for the company purchasing the fixed assets of sick unit, giving more teeth to Delayed payment Act, renewed Tiny Sector Policy, phased dereservation of products reserved for SSIs and removal of Inspector Raj & waiver from the labour laws for SSIs employing 50/100 workers with/without power.

(c) Steps taken/contemplated by the Government on the recommendations of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) are:—

(i) Reserve Bank of India has advised commercial banks to assess the working capital requirements of SSI units as recommended by Nayak Committee. The turnover limit for appraising the working capital requirements of SSI units using the Nayak Committee recommendations has been enhanced from Rs. 4 crores to Rs. 5 crores in the Union Budget for 1999-2000.

(ii) The excise exemption limit for SSIs was raised from Rs. 30 lakhs to Rs. 50 lakhs only in June, 1998. As any increase in the exemption limit results in shrinkage in the tax base for excise duty and resultant loss of revenue, therfore, the limit has not been further enhanced in the Union Budget for 1999-2000.

(iii) As regards encouraging R&D expenditure, rate of weighted reduction of 125 per cent for inhouse scientific research and development under Section 35 (2AB) of the Income Tax Act, 1961 is considered sufficient incentive for inducement of funds into the small scale sector.

(vi) Depreciation is allowed at different rates for the company purchasing the fixed assets of a sick unit depending on the nature of assets and its longevity. Since these transactions are based on business expediency and commercial considerations, CII recommendation does not merit a departure from the existing rate structure.

(v) Interest on Delayed Payments Act has been amended in 1998 to give more teeth to the Act so as to effectively tackle the problem of settlement of dues of small scale units by large units.

(vi) Tiny sector policy package was announced in August, 1998 which inter-alia earmarked facilities for tiny units under Integrated Infrastructure Development Scheme, assistance by National Small Industries Corporation and credit under Refinance Scheme of Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI). To alleviate the problem of Tiny Sector's inability to provide adequate security, a new Credit Insurance Scheme bas been announced in the Union Budget 1999-2000.

(vii) The policy of reservation is continuously being reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Reservation. Based on its recommendation Government has recently announced dereservation of nine items.

(viii) The States implement the various laws and regulations concerning small scale industries. finance Minister, in his Budget speech for 1998-99, had urged

the State Governments to review their laws and regulation and make necessary changes to lighten the burden of Inspector Raj. Moreover, labour laws have been enacted for the safety, security and welfare of workers. Exemption to small scale units employing 50/100 workers with/without power from labour Laws will deprive most of the workers in small scale industries of the benefits/protection available under various labour laws.

Revival of Hindustan Photo Films Manufacturing Company Ltd.

2084. SHRI V. P. DURAISAMY: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any decision to revive the sick Hindustan Photo Films Manufacturing company Ltd., Ooty;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Industry Secretary, who visited the company recently to assess the situation, has submitted his report; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE INDUSTRY (SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL): (a) No, Sir

(b) Does not airse in view of reply at (a) above.

(c) and (d) No report was required to be submitted.

Appointment of non-official Directors in PSUs

2085. MISS FARIDA TOPNO: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any policy to appoint non-official Directors in public sector undertakings under his Ministry;

(b) if so, whether there is any vacancy for appointment of non-official Directors in the boards of public sector undertakings;

(c) if so, the total number thereof with the names of the companies; and

(d) the steps being taken to fill up such vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) to (d) As per the guidelines, the number of non-official Director on a Board should be at least one-third of its actual strength. In practice, however, non-official Directors are appointed based on each Company's special requirements.

Multinationals Wiping Beedi Sector

2086. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received representations from a number of trade unions on the issue of multinationals wiping out the beedi sector;

(b) if so, whether Government have conducted any study on this subject;

(c) the steps proposed by Government to carefully monitor the employment in the beedi sector; and

(d) the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (e) An exercise of issuing identity cards to Beedi workers is undertaken regularly by the Government which indicates the trend of employment in the industry. Upto the years 1996, 1997 and 1998, identity cards have been issued to 32, 23, 863; 34, 51, 291 and 35, 74, 754 beedi workers respectively.